

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 10889 171729Z
ACTION NEA-10

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FOLLOWING RECD FROM BOMBAY SENT NEW DELHI, CALCUTTA, MADRAS
DATED JULY 17, 1978 BEING RPTD TO YOU

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJECT: MAHARASHTRA POLITICAL SITUATION UNCERTAIN

1. THE JULY 16 RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS (C) WORKING COMMITTEE
DIRECTING ITS MAHARASHTRA UNIT TO "SCRAP THE COALITION GOVERNMENT
IN THE STAE" IMMEDIATELY AND "TO SIT THE OPPOSITION IN THE
STATE LEGISLATURE" HAS INCREASED POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY IN
MAHARASHTRA. ON THE DIRECTIVE OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE THE
MAHARASHTRA
CHIEF MINISTER VASANTRAO PATIL SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION THIS
MORNING AND THE GOVERNOR ACCEPTED IT.

2. THE WORKING COMMITTEE DECISION AGAINST A COALITION WITH
THE JANATA PARTY OR ACCEPTING THE LATTER'S SUPPORT DERAILED SHARAD
PAWAR'S MOVE TO LEAD A JANATA-CONGRESS (C) COALITION IN
MAHARASHTRA.

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 10889 171729Z

3. THE WORKING COMMITTEE ACTION AVERTED, AT LEAST
TEMPORARILY, A SERIOUS SPLIT IN CONGRESS PARTY RANKS. ESPECIALLY
IN MAHARASHTRA BY KEEPING BOTH THE JANATA AND THE
CONGRESS (I) EQUIDISTANT. THIS IS A SETBACK FOR SHARAD
PAWAR AND IN COME WAYS PERHAPS TO Y.V. CHAVAN, BUT IN
OTHER WAYS IT IS ALSO A AVICTORY FOR LATTER AS IT PUTS AN END

TO CONGRESS UNITY TALKS. PAWAR AND HIS SUPPORTERS COULD
DEFY THE WORKING COMMITTEE EITHER BY FORMING A REGIONAL
PARTY THAT WOULD ENTER INTO A FORMAL COLAITION WITH THE JANATA
OR THAT WOULD SUPPORT A JANATA GOVERNMENT FROM OUTSIDE.

4. JANATA CONCEIVABLY COULD ATTRACT SUFFICIENT OUTSIDE
SUPPORTERS TO FORM A GOVERNMENT ON ITS OWN EVEN IF PAWAR
STAYS IN THE CONGRESS AS IT NOW HAS AN ALLIANCE NUMBERING
133 MLAS. IT WOULD NEED TO ATTRAAT ONLY 12 MORE TO HAVE
A MAJORITY IN THE 288 MEMBER STATE LEGISLATIVE ASEMBLY.
HOWEVER, WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL DEFECTIONS FROM THE CONGRESS
PARTIES MOST OBSERVERS DO NOT BELIEVE JANATA COULD FORM A
STABLE GOVERNMENT HERE.

5. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE A GOOD ESTIMATE AMONG
FOLLOWING PROSPECTS

- (A) RESTORATION OF A PATIL-LED GOVERNMENT;
- (B) PAWAR-LED GOVERNMENT, SUPPORTED BY JANATA V
- (C) JANATA GOVERNMENT, BENEFITTING FROM SOME CONGRESS (I)
- (C) DEFECTIONS;
- (D) PRESIDENT'S RULE, AND
- (E) NEW ELECTIONS.

6. MOST POLITICANS VIEW THE LAST TWO POSSIBILITIES AS
THE LEAST ATTRACTIVE, BUT THERE IS A REAL QUESTION AS TO
WHETHER ANY POSSIBLE GROUPING FROM THE PRESENT ASSEMBLY
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PAGE 03 NEW DE 10889 171729Z

CAN FORM A STABLE GOVERNMENT. WITHOUT SOME MEETING OF
MINDS OF PARTY PRINCIPALS IN NEW DELHI (THIS WOULD INCLUDE
CONGRESS (C) AND JANATA LEADERS AND POSSIBLY MRS. GANDHI)
IT MAY PROVE IMPOSSIBLE FOR LOCAL MAHARASHTRA POLITICIANS
TO PUT TOGETHER A STABLE GOVERNMENT, GIVEN THE COMPOSITION
OF THE PRESENT LEGISLATIVE ASEMBLY.

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